

# GLORIA'S ROMANCE

Novellized From the Motion Picture Drama  
of the Same Name by George Kleins  
and Featuring Miss Billie Burke

—Novelization By—  
**Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes**

## SECOND EPISODE CAUGHT BY THE SEMINOLES

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**L**ITTLE MISS STAFFORD, wandering in a silk dinner frock through the jungle of the Everglades at midnight, did not even know that she was lost. The terrors that were in store for her she was not imagining. She was still giggling over her imaginings of the excitement at Palm Beach when her governess discovered that she had run away. Having pinned the gorgon's cloth slippers to the rug, Gloria felt sure that the governess would tumble to the fact as soon as she got up to take a peek at her charge.

There was excitement in plenty at Palm Beach, even more than Gloria dreamed, for the grownups knew what Gloria did not know, how dangerous the path of life is for a young girl alone. All the world is treacherous everglades to her.

Miss Sidney awoke as Gloria expected, sprawled as well as Gloria hoped, her feet on high and the rug waving in the air. She knew who played the trick and ran into Gloria's room. She saw that the bed was empty, the sleeping suit tossed aside, the dinner gown gone. She flung on her bathrobe and ran to give the alarm to Gloria's father. Her costume made a sensation even among the sensational costumes of Palm Beach. She found Pierpont playing cards with young Dr. Royce.

What she told them sent them running in opposite directions, frightening the dancers and the loiterers about the tables in the gardens and various couples surprised in loving embrace among the inviting nooks. On the lawn the two men came together again and shook their heads in signal of failure. They saw David and Lois. David mentioned the loss of his automobile. Neither he nor Pierpont thought of Gloria as the thief. They continued the search among the crannies of the enormous hotel and among the cottages of their friends.

But Dr. Royce had been speaking of Gloria's rebellious heart only that afternoon. He ran at once to a parking space where automobiles were kept. The chauffeurs were not about and he did not pause to haggle. He threw away a "For Hire" card and leaping into the saddle, so to speak, of a six-cylinder thoroughbred, dug his spurs into its side and plied the lash.

The car broke into such a run that its own chauffeur did not recognize it as it shot into the main road. Royce checked his speed only when he met occasional lanterns along the road. From most of these he got no information. From one negro on a bicycle chair he had the comforting answer:

"Yassa, I done seen a bar-haired young missy in a automobile going lickety split—yassa. She turned sothe at the next corner. If I hadn't a throwed this year wheel over mighty peart I'd a—"

He had about decided to turn back and endure the laughter that would greet him. Long ago, no doubt Gloria had reappeared and been resented to bed.

But even as he slowed up for the turn he caught sight of tire tracks swerving wildly and turning off into the sand between two dunes. He shut off his power and set his brakes, drove into the side of the road and jumped out.

He passed the barrier of the dunes

and caught sight of David's racing car in the waves. The billows flaming with moonlight were sweeping over the little machine with terrifying ruthlessness, now tossing up spray which the moon turned to jewelry, now smothering it all from view.

Royce gazed aghast. He tore his hair at the vision. He could almost see Gloria caught in the wheel and held fast while she drowned slowly, chokingly.

He was about to dash into the sea and fight it for the body of the little runaway when he saw footprints in the wet sand. Robinson Crusoe could not have felt so wild a thrill of joy. Dr. Royce did not see the marks of a black man's sole; he saw the impress of tiny slippers. They were usually had to be searched for themselves.

If Royce had not known this, the boy would have told him, for when Royce asked him to get down and help in the search for Gloria the boy shook his head with emphasis:

"Imp-um, mister! Not me! Folks that gits lost back in yonder stays lost for keeps."

This did not for a moment tempt Royce to give up. He was about to let the boy go when it occurred to him that Gloria's father would be frantic for some word of her whereabouts. He found a prescription pad in his pocket and a bit of pencil and he wrote a note.

"Pierpont Stafford, Royal Poinciana: I found Gloria's car in the surf and her footprints leading into the Everglades. I am following them, but think you had better organize searching parties to beat the whole district."

"STEPHEN ROYCE."

He gave this to the boy and a bill from the main roll he found in his pockets. He made the boy promise to go to the nearest telephone and transmit the message to the hotel.

He asked the boy to explain to Mr. Stafford where "here" was. Royce had no idea himself. The boy told him: "We-all are about half ways between Pompano and Colohatchee."

Royce's face did not brighten at this and the boy with contempt for such ignorance explained that it was "going" on forty miles south of Palm Beach.

He knew the history of that vast maze, no hospitable to all save the Indians; that only two or three white men have ever crossed its 8,000 square miles of pathless waste. Those who have gone in to search for others have

usually had to be searched for themselves.

He had heard of lost people who walked in circles till they died of exhaustion. She felt ready to do so already. But mainly she was yawning her pretty head off. She beat about the bush and said "good-night" to the crowd of her best friends.

Also that she had a some rough characters or even some Seminole Indians on her way back, and that she would be safer as a girl.

This convinced Gloria. She said for the clothes with the ring and went into the shack to change. The old woman snatched the gold bracelet from her arm. She took as part payment for the weak but bitter coffee that Gloria gulped down.

When Gloria was dressed the Sipe boy was ordered to take her to a path which would eventually lead her to the main road.

It was easier walking in breeches than in the skirts she had worn. But she did not like the manner of the boy. He began to pay her crude compliments and finally grew so impudent that she boxed his ears. He took his revenge by pointing her in the wrong direction. He turned back and laughed. He had an ill-nourished sense of humor.

Gloria pushed on and on, growing more and more doubtful of the way and dimly footsore. She longed for the little racing car that she had left in the waves, or even for a pony or a mule. She prayed for anything to ride.

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The family known as the "Cyprus Wolves" was the sole remnant of one of the fiercest tribes the pale faces had met in the Seminole wars.

Many of the tribe had been captured by the unparadise treachery. The gladiators of that day, unable to follow the Indians to their haunts, used false promises to lure them out. Our dealings with the Seminoles are among the worst blotches on American history. They earned for us the undying distrust of such Indians as still remain in the Everglades. To this day the Seminoles are called "the white man's enemy" and "the liar" is a synonym.

They guard the secret paths of the maze with religious devotion and they have refused all bribes to disclose them. The Indians nowadays are often kindly to such lost explorers as fall among them. They will guide the wanderers out, but they will not guide them in.



THE YOUNG CHIEF LEAPED FROM AMBUSH AND CAUGHT THE HORSE.

of her, a shred of silk from her Paris frock torn away by a clutching thorn. He found even a loop of vine where she had loitered. He was puzzled by the curious sequence of her slipper marks till he realized that she must have paused to swing like a carefree child. This gave him a little comfort.

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Almost everybody in Florida must have been aware of Gloria's disappearance except the family of shiftless paupers named Sipe. They had come south some years before and put their savings in an orange grove. A vicious winter frost had ruined them in a night. They had neither the spirit to go North nor to conquer the South. They sank into a kind of sluggish lethargy, hating the world and all the lucky ones.

The tropical fertility of the soil barely kept them from starvation, and they loafed through life in slovenly dejection.

Gloria had lain down to sleep just about where the Sipe fence would have been if there had been a fence. She had not seen their shack beyond the heavy growth.

When she woke and yawned and rubbed her eyes and looked about she decided that she must have fallen asleep in the horticultural building at Bronx Park.

She did not like to be out in the broad daylight in an evening gown, especially not in a gown so torn that the broad daylight shown through it in places.

She caught sight of the Sipe house. It was a tumble-down hut, but it looked like the Royal Poinciana to her. The pigs and the many dogs might have been gazelles in a park and the ragged man and woman and boy might have been a group of royal blood.

She ran toward them for shelter. They received her with stupid wonder and with no hospitality. When she told who she was the name of Stafford meant nothing to them.

She told how she came there, how they did not believe her. They stared at the little diamond ring on her finger and the gold bracelet at her wrist. These meant something to them.

The woman upbraided Gloria for being out in such rags and Gloria offered to buy anything she had. Mrs. Sipe refused to sell what she had on, which was a pair of worn-out shoes. The only extra clothing was a new suit she was making for the boy out of some hemp sacking. Gloria did not want a boy's clothes, but Mrs. Sipe insisted that they were like new.

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The old squaw gave a wild cry of alarm, the fierce "Yo-ho-ee-hee!" that had once made the Indian hunters' blood run cold. The tribe answered in wondering haste. She pointed to Gloria and the vanishing horse. The Seminoles divided and ran in various directions to head her off. In a few moments the young chief himself leaped from ambush and caught the horse by the nose and ear. The old squaw was not far behind and Gloria was dragged to the ground and threatened with the death of a thief—a sacrilegious thief.

He seized Gloria's hand and shouted: "If boy is squaw he is my squaw." Gloria died and threatened. Frenau with meaning of this. But she saw that it had not endeared her to the Indian women. They murmured their wrath and would have struck her down if it had not been for the fact that she did not pursue him far. He stood watching for him to reappear.

Meanwhile, by another roundabout land path, Royce had found the Seminole village. He saw Gloria where she lay on the ground. He thought her some young Indian maiden asleep. He paused to look at her and she had seen Gloria.

They led her into the village, a huddled group of palmetto shacks, mainly open sheds with a roof thatched of palmetto leaves. The place was not attractive to any of the senses. The Seminoles are not neat. Dead fish lying about the ground and old terrapin shells pleased neither the eye nor the nose.

Shonolake first went aside and sent the dead chiefs' horse on the long road to the happy pastures. Then she returned to prepare Gloria for the honor of becoming the wife of the chief. She led her into her own hut and gave her the habiliments of an honest squaw in place of the boy's graceful toga. Seminole ladies are free. Then she showed Gloria a little sewing machine. She had bought it with the proceeds of rattlesnake skins she had sold to tourists in the villages along the railroad.

She promised Gloria that some day if she were good she might be allowed to play on the machine. The squaw's fingers were busy sewing busily of doing heavy labor. The first duty of a wife was to gather wood for the fire. She set Gloria to work.

Seeing the pitiful little thing in her Indian rags, he went down to pick up sticks. Royce himself might have passed her without a second look.

Royce was not the only one in the village who had a second look. Frenau had gone as far as his motor boat would carry him. Then he had found a native Indian with a dug-out, a cyprus log hollowed out and fitted with a paddle. He had heard nothing of Gloria's presence in the thicket, but he promised to guide Frenau to some of the scattered villages.

Meanwhile Dr. Royce, hunting in every direction, had happened upon the home of the Sipes, and had asked about Gloria. He had heard nothing of Gloria's presence in the thicket, but he promised to guide Frenau to some of the scattered villages.

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